

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE****CONSULTING ASSESSMENT ENVIRONMENT**

5           A method, apparatus, and computer program product  
for providing a consulting assessment environment.  
Consultants may use the environment to define templates  
that encode questionnaires and domain knowledge regarding  
business practices, as well as reporting criteria to  
10 specify the content and format of the assessment results.  
Consultants or their clients may use the environment to  
automate the process of performing assessments and  
generating reports from those assessments. These  
assessments may analyze the current state of the  
15 business, compare the business's current state with  
desired states or with best practices, and perform  
risk/benefit and/or cost/benefit analyses, according to  
the specifications made in the templates on a real-time  
basis for producing immediate assessment results and  
20 actions. An information hiding feature is provided to  
allow sensitive domain knowledge encoded within the  
templates, such as trade secrets, to be made inaccessible  
to clients.